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June 15, 2020

Dear Lexington City Schools Families -

As you are aware, last week Governor Northam presented a multiple phase plan for reopening schools in the fall under strict guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Virginia Department of Health (VDH). All school divisions have received a copy of the state's *Recover, Redesign, Restart* plan, a 136-page guidance document from the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE). All of this information is new to our school leaders, and we are working diligently to understand the guidance and actively plan for the 2020-2021 school year.

For more detailed information about the phases of reopening schools, please visit the following site:

http://doe.virginia.gov/support/health_medical/covid-19/recover-redesign-restart.shtml#

We know that school is going to look different this fall, and we must make adjustments and work together to overcome the many challenges ahead. We are committed to keeping our students and staff our top priority as we plan for their health and safety, well-being, and learning. Social distancing, hand washing, and using good judgement are key to any plan we develop to re-open schools and move our community forward.

The LCS administrative team is working hard to continue preparations for the fall. We are currently working on the following steps:

1. We are looking at our operational and instructional needs for reopening schools. We are considering how to adjust our school calendar and schedules and the logistical details for offering both in-person and virtual instruction for students while keeping our schools clean and safe for all.
2. We are looking at training needs for our staff with regards to offering virtual instruction, social-emotional support for all students, and following health and safety protocols.
3. A survey will be sent out soon to assist us in better understanding the needs of our families and to help guide our work and decision-making. It is important that all families complete the survey as this information will be important in guiding our planning efforts.
4. We know you are anxious to know more about our plans, potential school calendar changes, and logistics for the re-opening of our schools. We will continue to provide you with regular updates and information as our work progresses.

Our plans for the start of the new school year with regards to teaching and learning, both in-person and virtually, will not look the same as our fourth quarter of school from March 13-May 22. The continuity of learning plan put into place this spring was an emergency plan intended to provide continued at-home learning experiences for students while schools were closed. As we move forward, our plans will likely include virtual and blended learning experiences, new instruction, and graded schoolwork.

Working together, we will do our very best to develop a plan that works for our community. We know that there is no perfect plan that works for everyone, and we will need to be flexible as we proceed as change is inevitable. I ask for your patience and your support as we work through the details to provide you with answers as soon as possible. We will continue to communicate with you as we learn more about what next school year may look like for students and families. I hope that we will have a more detailed plan ready to communicate to you in early July.

Thank you for your continued support and encouragement. Our team remains committed to providing our students with the best educational experiences possible. Together, I am confident that we can meet these challenges head on and grow as a school community.

Stay safe and enjoy your summer!

Best,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rebecca J. Walters".

Rebecca J. Walters
Superintendent